

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 MCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /068 W

-----130415Z 025193 /70

R 120907Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4794

INFO CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 571

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, RP

SUBJECT: MARCOS RECEIVES ANTI-REBEL "REBELS"

REF: MANILA 508

1. IN WIDELY PUBLICIZED CEREMONY JAN 11, MARCOS RECEIVED REPRESENTATIVES OF NEW "MORO REFORM LIBERATION FRONT" (MRLF) WHICH ACCORDING PRESS CONSISTS OF "ORIGINAL REBEL COMMANDERS OF MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF)." DELEGATION GAVE PRESIDENT RESOLUTION DEMANDING THAT GOP, HAVING CONDUCTED NEGOTIATIONS WITH MNLF IN TRIPOLI, SHOULD NOW CONDUCT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THEIR GROUP. PRESIDENT MADE NO PUBLIC COMMITMENT AND REFERRED RESOLUTION TO UNDERSECRETARY BARBERO "FOR ACTION" WITH COPIES TO LIBYAN UNDERSECRETARY MINISTER AL-TREKI AND SEC GEN GAYE OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE. MLRF "COMMANDERS" CLAIMED TO REPRESENT MAJORITY OF MUSLIMS IN PHILIPPINES AND 26,000 FIGHTING MEN. MARCOS INSTRUCTED ADMIRAL ESPALDON (WHO WAS PRESENT) TO VERIFY THESE FIGURES.

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2. COMMENT: NEEDLESS TO SAY THESE ARE MORE THAN MERE MOROS. DELEGATION INCLUDED MAJORITY OF SENIOR MNLF FIGURES WHO HAVE DEFECTED TO GOVERNMENT IN PAST YEARS (SALI WALI, "JUDGE" ABDULHAMID LUCMAN, "SHEIF" CAMLIAN, HUDAN ABUBAKAR, ETC.) PLUS SOME (LANAO DEL SUR GOVERNOR ALI DIMAPORO) WHO WERE NEVER MORE THAN FENCE

SITTERS AT MOST. WE HAVE NOT HEARD FORMULATION "MRLF"
BEFORE AND IT WAS PRESUMABLY CREATED FOR OCCASION.
ALTHOUGH PATENTLY TRANSPARENT THIS PLOY IS LINE WITH
LONG-STANDING GOP POLICY OF CLAIMING THAT MNLF DOES NOT
SPEAK FOR ALL MUSLIM REBELS MUCH LESS ALL MUSLIMS IN
PHILIPPINES. (SAME POLICY LIKELY RESULTED IN CURIOUS
FORMULATION, " LIBERATION FRONT OF THE MUSLIMS, BE THEY IN
MORO OR ELSEWHERE" IN LIBYAN-PHILIPPINE COMMUNIQUE OF
NOVEMBER 17.) AS IN PAST THIS POLICY RUNS RISK OF FURTHER
ALIENATING HARD CORE REBELS WHO NEVER SURRENDERED. MRLF
MANIFESTO COULD ALSO BE USED BY GOP TO BACK OUT OF
TRIPOLI AGREEMENT SHOULD THAT BE DEEMED NECESSAARY.
EMBASSY HAS LEARNED THAT OTHER MUSLIM ELEMENTS HAVE ALREADY
REACTED TO MRLF DEMAND BY CIRCULATING PETITION WHICH SUPPORTS
TRIPOLI AGREEMENT, AND ARGUES THAT PLEBISCITE NOT NECESSARY
FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF THIRTEEN-PROVINCE AUTONOMOUS REGION.
SULLIVAN

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NNN

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